

California State Senate

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March 28, 2008

Douglas Bosco
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Edgewood County Park & Natural Preserve Interpretive Center

Dear Mr. Bosco:

I am writing to express my support for the grant application submitted to the California State Coastal Conservancy by the Edgewood County Park & Natural Preserve for exhibit fabrication at Edgewood's proposed interpretive center.

Since 1970, community members have worked to save the land from inappropriate development, establish the park and elevate its status to a Preserve. Today, some of the same people – and many, many more – work with rangers to care for the Preserve and lead wildflower or bird walks open to the community. This history of community activism and continued involvement of volunteers attests to Edgewood Preserve's special nature.

The Preserve is easily accessible to local residents and school visitors from San Francisco, San Mateo County and Santa Clara County, and provides both educational and recreational opportunities. The Preserve is known for its numerous habitats and wildflowers as well as its varied trails and vistas of peninsula landscapes.

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OAKLAND, CALIF.



Edgewood serves as an outdoor classroom and is well-suited to hands-on, interactive fieldtrips that reinforce curriculum concepts of ecosystems, life cycles, adaptations for survival, food chains, plant and animal interrelationships, and nutrient recycling by decomposers. A center with exhibits, designed with the needs of teachers in mind and linked to the State's curriculum standards, a learning center and amphitheater space will enhance the educational opportunities at the Preserve.

An interpretive center featuring interesting and relevant exhibits at the Preserve with will also further the goal of instilling a stewardship ethic in all who visit Edgewood. Key aspects of this include increasing people's awareness that environmental stewardship begins with them and increasing the number of people who actively participate in the restoration and preservation of Edgewood. I encourage full funding of this grant application.

Sincerely,



Senator Joe Simitian
11th District

cc: Michelle Jesperson, Project Manager, Coastal Conservancy
Julia Bott, San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation

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Assembly
California Legislature



IRA RUSKIN
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, TWENTY-FIRST DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
CHAIR, BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE #3
- RESOURCES
BUDGET
HIGHER EDUCATION
LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
TRANSPORTATION

March 5, 2008

Mr. Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I strongly support the proposed interpretive center at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve and urge approval of grant funds to the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation for the exhibits.

I believe this interpretive center will allow current and future generations the opportunity to appreciate the natural history of their surroundings. As a longtime resident and former Mayor of Redwood City, I am able to attest that Edgewood County Park is a valuable resource for our community.

Over the past few years, the collective efforts of the Foundation, the San Mateo County Department of Parks and Dr. Stuart Weiss, a research scientist, has resulted in the successful re-introduction of the checkerspot butterfly to Edgewood Park. However, due to the lifecycle of the butterfly and the sensitive nature of the site, it is not always possible to directly share the information with school groups. Exhibits in the center will allow learning about the natural surrounding while preserving delicate habitats.

A center with exhibits, designed with the needs of teachers in mind and linked to the State's curriculum standards, along with a learning center and amphitheater space will enhance the educational opportunities at the preserve. I urge approval of this worthy project.

Sincerely,

IRA RUSKIN
Assemblymember, 21st District

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cc: Michelle Jesperson, Project Manager, Coastal Conservancy
Julia Bott, San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

E-mail: assemblymember.ruskin@assembly.ca.gov • Website: democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a21





Department of Parks COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

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April 3, 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chair
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612.

Dear Chair Bosco:

The San Mateo County Department of Parks strongly supports the proposed California Coastal Conservancy grant to the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation for the exhibits at the Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve.

The San Mateo County Department of Parks is the steward of over 16,000 acres of unique and sensitive habitats. Since the budget cuts of proposition 13, the County has provided minimal educational and interpretive experiences for youth and relies heavily on its partner groups such as the Foundation, "Friends" organizations and other environmental education providers to fill this gap. Recognizing the value of such programs, the Department of Parks is grateful for and supportive of efforts that provide facilities and programs that support outdoor learning and bringing students to the County Parks.

The interpretative center at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve is a tool that will enable these programs and therefore more children to explore the natural preserve. We know that these experiences will inspire them to become the future stewards of our parks.

Since 1998, the San Mateo County Department of Parks (Parks) has benefited from a cooperative relationship with the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation (Foundation), receiving in-kind and direct donations of \$8 million for a variety of programs and projects that add value to San Mateo County's parks. This relationship is sanctioned by a contract between the County of San Mateo and the Foundation. The Parks and the Foundation have established a collaborative working relationship that efficiently capitalizes on each organization's skills and resources. The interpretative center at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve is prime example of this successful relationship.

The Foundation's in-kind and direct contributions to the project have or will include:

Chair Douglas Bosco

April 3, 2008

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- Cash contribution for Concept Plan
- Cash contribution for environmental review and permitting
- In-kind contribution of civil, landscape and architectural plans
- In-kind contribution of prefabricated FSC certified wood pedestrian bridge
- Cash contribution for Cordilleras Creek Restoration Project
- Cash contribution towards infrastructure, parking lot and entrance improvements
- Cash contribution for building construction costs
- Cash contribution for external costs such as bidding and contract management by the Department of Public Works
- In-kind contribution of exhibits and program materials
- Maintenance endowment
- Staff time for review and coordination

The County of San Mateo's contributions to the project have or will include:

- Dedication of proposition 12 funds towards parking lot and entrance improvements
- Staff time for review and coordination, including activities necessary to secure permits
- Services of maintenance unit for transport and placement of serpentine boulders
- Routine maintenance of building and landscaping

In addition, the San Mateo County Department of Public Works has or will manage the bid process, contracting and review of construction components of the project.

The Coastal Conservancy's grant to the Foundation is a pivotal piece of the project's success and we urge approval of the grant.

Sincerely



David G. Holland
Director

cc: Michelle Jespersen, CCC
Julia Bott, San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation

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OAKLAND, CALIF.



FRIENDS OF EDGEWOOD NATURAL PRESERVE

P.O. Box 3422, Redwood City, CA 94064-3422 • (866) GO-EDGEWOOD • www.friendsofedgewood.org

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March 7, 2008

Chairman Douglas Bosco
Coastal Conservancy Chair
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612.

Dear Chairman Bosco,

The Friends Of Edgewood Natural Preserve (FoE) strongly supports establishment of the proposed interpretive center at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve and urges approval of grant funds to the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation for the exhibits.

FoE is a non-profit, California public benefit organization with a membership base of over 200 households from the community surrounding Edgewood (mostly San Mateo and Santa Clara counties). Members are interested in protecting and restoring Edgewood's natural resources as well as enhancing all visitors' experiences in the Preserve. Our mission is to preserve Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve for the human, plant, and animal generations to come. All of our members volunteer their time, energy, and resources because of their appreciation for Edgewood.

The Friends of Edgewood strongly support the development of an interpretive center at the Preserve. We have and will continue to actively participate in the efforts to design and build the center and eagerly look forward to substantially supporting the center, which in turn will provide a high level of added value to our educational, docent, and habitat restoration programs.

Representatives of FoE participated as stakeholders in the concept plan. Early in the effort, we joined two other organizations, California Native Plant Society - Santa Clara Valley Chapter and the Emerald Hills Homeowners Association, in offering to match gifts from our members for the center. Even though that challenge grant has ended, we continue to provide contributions towards the center's completion, with over \$20,000 contributed to date. We provide regular updates on the center's progress to our members through our website, newsletter, guided walks and events. Our docents are eager to be trained to staff the interpretive center.

While our weekend guided walk and habitat restoration programs will benefit from the center, we are particularly excited about the opportunities the center will provide to our schools outreach program.

This program invites teachers and students to participate in a hands-on empirical outdoor education program at Edgewood Natural Preserve. The unique serpentine plant, insect, and animal communities distinguish Edgewood as an ideal location to understand and experience endangered, threatened, and unique species first-hand. Close to many peninsula schools, Edgewood offers special opportunities for exploration and understanding of the natural environment.

All educational programs are volunteer-based and free of charge. Small group tours promote favorable student-docent interaction. Programs include:

- Docent-led discovery walks at Edgewood Preserve for elementary school groups, using a hands-on, interactive approach. Field trip programs are correlated with California science content standards, including the concepts of ecosystems, life cycles, adaptations for survival, food chains, plant and animal interrelationships, and nutrient recycling by decomposers, demonstrating their particular application to the natural communities at Edgewood.
- Field trips for high school or middle school science classes, which may be combined with habitat restoration or environmental science projects.
- Boy Scout and Girl Scout field trips, which can be associated with earning badges.
- Tours for homeschoolers or special children's groups.

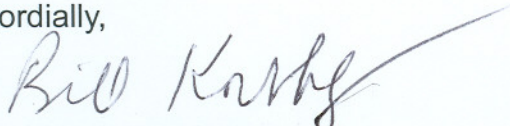
The interpretive center will help us improve this program in numerous ways:

- We could expand our outreach to students with disabilities, as we could do many more activities that would not necessarily require hiking.
- We can conduct programs during bad weather when it is not practical to take children on the trails.
- The interpretive center will allow storage of outdoor educational demonstration items (models, flash cards, charts) that will allow the docents to communicate more effectively with the children.
- The configuration of the center will make it easier to greet and orient students, and provide an overview of concepts. We have found that it can be difficult to maintain the attention of students who are strung out along a trail.
- It will help us publicize our activities and sustain community outreach more effectively.
- Students can be encouraged to bring their parent(s) back to the park and they can visit the center, showing them what they learned.
- We could increase our roster of active volunteers (currently approximately 60 trained wildflower walks and schools outreach docents).

In anticipation of being able to expand our program, the schools outreach program is recruiting and training additional docents. We are increasing our outreach efforts to schools, targeting schools that have a high percentage of students receiving low-cost or free school lunches. Last year we were granted funding to transport these students to the Preserve.

We urge approval of the grant for the exhibits at the interpretive center at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve so that our docents have an additional tool to help inspire stewardship.

Cordially,



Bill Korbholz, President
Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve

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OAKLAND, CALIF.

copy: Julia Bott, Executive Director
San Mateo County Parks & Recreation Foundation

Regional Open Space

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

March 24, 2008

Chairman Douglas Bosco
Coastal Conservancy Chair
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612.

Dear Chairman Bosco,

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) strongly supports the proposed interpretive center at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve, and urges approval of grant funds to the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation towards the exhibits.

The District was involved early on in the efforts to protect the valuable and unique natural resources at Edgewood County Park. San Mateo County and the District worked together in 1980 to secure funding for acquisition of the property by the County. The District retains a strong connection to the area via a conservation easement and involvement in shared resources – many District docents are also Friends of Edgewood volunteers who provide guided access to the Preserve, sharing their knowledge and a passion for the unique environment with the public. A District staff member served on the initial concept planning team for the proposed Nature Center, and currently I represent the District as part of an environmental education-networking group with the Friends of Edgewood, and other like intentioned organizations and agencies.

Edgewood County Park & Natural Preserve is easily accessible to the residents and schools from San Francisco, San Mateo County and Santa Clara County and provides both recreation and educational opportunities. The Preserve is known for its numerous habitats and wildflowers as well as its varied trails and vistas of peninsula landscapes. It also serves as an outdoor classroom and is well suited to hands-on, interactive fieldtrips that reinforce curriculum concepts of ecosystems, life cycles, adaptations for survival, food chains, plant and animal interrelationships, and nutrient recycling by decomposers.

An interpretive center, with interesting and relevant exhibits, will help efforts at the Preserve to develop a stewardship ethic in all who visit Edgewood. Key goals of this include increasing people's awareness that environmental stewardship begins with them and increasing the number of people who actively participate in the restoration and preservation of Edgewood.

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District urges approval of this worthy project.

Sincerely,



Renée Fitzsimons
Docent Programs and Daniels Nature Center Coordinator

cc: Michelle Jespersen, Project Manager, Coastal Conservancy
Julia Bott, San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation
Craig Britton, General Manager, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Rudy Jurgensen, Public Affairs Manager, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

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